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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 2013

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/68/438/Add.5)*]

68/213. Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 67/211 of 21 December 2012, as well as other resolutions relating to the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,[1]

Recalling also the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want",[2] in which the Conference, inter alia, recognized the economic and social significance of good land management, including soil, particularly its contribution to economic growth, biodiversity, sustainable agriculture and food security, eradicating poverty, women's empowerment, addressing climate change and improving water availability, stressed that desertification, land degradation and drought are challenges of a global dimension that continue to pose serious challenges to the sustainable development of all countries, in particular developing countries, stressed also the particular challenges this poses for Africa, the least developed countries and the landlocked developing countries, expressed deep concern at the devastating consequences of cyclical drought and famine in Africa, in particular in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel region, and called for urgent action through short-, medium- and long-term measures at all levels,

Recalling further that the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development recognized the need for urgent action to reverse land degradation and, in view of this, for striving to achieve a land-degradation-neutral world in the context of sustainable development, which should act to catalyse financial resources from a range of public and private sources,

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

[2] Resolution 66/288, annex.

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Concerned by the devastating consequences of extreme weather phenomena in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid regions, characterized by recurrent and long spells of drought, flooding and increasing frequency and severity of dust-storms and sandstorms, and their negative impact on the environment and the economy,

Emphasizing the need to promote sustainable land management, sustainable forest management and the restoration of degraded lands in order to combat desertification, land degradation and drought,

Noting that avoiding additional land degradation, especially in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, while restoring degraded land, is crucial in order for the rural poor to achieve food security and access to energy and water,

Noting also the need for enhanced coordination and cooperation at all levels among the parties to and the secretariats of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change [3] and the Convention on Biological Diversity, [4] while respecting their individual mandates,

Underlining the cross-sectoral nature of desertification, land degradation and drought mitigation, including its economic, social and environmental dimensions, and in this regard inviting all relevant United Nations organizations to cooperate with the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, within their respective mandates, in supporting an effective response to those challenges,

Welcoming the organization of the third special session of the Committee on Science and Technology, during the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Second Scientific Conference, held in Bonn, Germany, from 9 to 12 April 2013,

Noting the eleventh session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, held from 15 to 19 April 2013 in Bonn, Germany, at which the Committee reviewed information relating to all performance and impact indicators of the 10-year strategic plan and framework, as well as information on financial flows for the implementation of the Convention, submitted by the parties and other reporting entities,

Welcoming the organization by the secretariats of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the World Meteorological Organization, in collaboration with a number of United Nations agencies and relevant United Nations offices, international and regional organizations and key national agencies, of a high-level meeting on national drought policy, held in Geneva from 11 to 15 March 2013, and taking note of the declaration adopted at that meeting,

Expressing its deep appreciation and gratitude to the Government of Namibia for hosting the eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention in Windhoek from 16 to 27 September 2013, and welcoming the offer of the Government of Turkey to host the twelfth session of the Conference of the Parties in 2015,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 67/211 and the implementation of the United Nations Convention to

[3] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

[4] Ibid., vol. 1760, No. 30619.

Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa;[5]

2. *Calls upon* Member States to take urgent action to reverse desertification, land degradation and drought, as appropriate, with the assistance of the United Nations system, relevant regional and international organizations, multilateral agencies, major groups and other stakeholders;

3. *Reaffirms its resolve*, in accordance with the Convention, to take coordinated action, nationally, regionally and internationally, to globally monitor land degradation and restore degraded lands in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas, also reaffirms its resolve to support and strengthen the implementation of the Convention and the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance its implementation (2008–2018), including by mobilizing adequate, predictable and timely financial resources, notes the importance of mitigating the effects of desertification, land degradation and drought, including by preserving and developing oases, restoring degraded lands, improving soil quality and improving water management in order to contribute to sustainable development and poverty eradication, encourages and recognizes in this regard the importance of partnerships and initiatives for the safeguarding of land resources, and also encourages capacity-building, extension training programmes and scientific studies and initiatives aimed at deepening understanding and raising awareness of the economic, social and environmental benefits of sustainable land management policies and practices;

4. *Encourages* giving appropriate consideration to the issues of desertification, land degradation and drought in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda;

5. *Stresses* the importance of the further development and implementation of scientifically based, sound and socially inclusive methods and indicators for monitoring and assessing the extent of desertification, land degradation and drought, as well as the importance of efforts under way to promote scientific research in accordance with the Convention;

6. *Invites* the parties to the Convention to provide the new Executive Secretary of the Convention with full support in the fulfilment of her mandate and in promoting the implementation of the Convention;

7. *Expresses its appreciation* for the efforts of the outgoing Executive Secretary in advancing the cause of the Convention;

8. *Takes note with appreciation* of the decision of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention to establish an intergovernmental working group to follow up the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development[6] and its decision to strengthen the Convention's scientific basis and improve the science-policy dialogue;[7]

9. *Takes note* of the decision of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention to relocate the Global Mechanism from the International Fund for Agricultural Development, in Rome, to Bonn, to be co-located with the secretariat

[5] A/68/260, sect. II.

[6] ICCD/COP(11)/23/Add.1 and Corr.1, decision 8/COP.11.

[7] Ibid., decision 23/COP.11.

of the Convention, as well as its decision to establish a liaison office in Rome with appropriate staff;[8]

10. *Reiterates* the need for cooperation through the sharing of climate and weather information, forecasting and early warning systems related to desertification, land degradation and drought, as well as to dust-storms and sandstorms, at the global, regional and subregional levels, and in this regard invites States and relevant organizations to cooperate in the sharing of related information, forecasting and early warning systems;

11. *Also reiterates* that the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development has reaffirmed women's vital role and full and equal participation and leadership in all areas of sustainable development, and in this regard invites donors and international organizations, including the organizations of the United Nations system, as well as international financial institutions, regional banks and major groups, including the private sector, to fully integrate their commitments and their considerations on gender equality and women's empowerment and to ensure the participation of women and effective gender mainstreaming in their decision-making in combating desertification, land degradation and drought;

12. *Notes* the importance of the participation of civil society organizations and other stakeholders, including the private sector, in the sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and its subsidiary bodies in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties, as well as the involvement of those stakeholders in the implementation of the Convention and the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance its implementation;

13. *Invites* the Global Environment Facility, in further enhancing resource allocation during future replenishments, to consider increasing allocations to the Convention, depending on the availability of resources, and further invites donors to the sixth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility to strive for a robust replenishment of resources, including for the land degradation focal area;

14. *Decides* to include in the United Nations calendar of conferences and meetings for the biennium 2014–2015 the sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and its subsidiary bodies envisaged for the biennium, and requests the Secretary-General to make provisions for the sessions of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2014–2015;

15. *Also decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-ninth session, under the item entitled "Sustainable development", the sub-item entitled "Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa";

16. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

71st plenary meeting
20 December 2013

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[8] Ibid., decision 6/COP.11.